

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY
INFO CSAF WASHDC

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EXDIS, MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: ANTI-DRUG OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA

1. AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING AMBASSADOR ASECIO,
THE COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR, THE COLOMBIAN AIR ATTACHE AND
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THE USAF, THE DEPART-
MENT HAS DETERMINED THAT THE USAF HAS THE ABILITY TO SIGNI-
FICANTLY ASSIST IN COUNTERING THE ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC IN
COLOMBIA.

2. THE AIR FORCE FLIES TRAINING MISSIONS ON A REGULAR
BASIS TO MAINTAIN CREW PROFICIENCY. THESE FLIGHTS HELP TO
DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN NECESSARY SKILLS IN SYSTEMS OPERATION,
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NAVIGATION AND AIRMANSHIP, AND IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE
USAF, ACTING UPON THE REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT UNDER
SECTION 481 OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT, AND WITH THE
APPROVAL OF THE GOC, TO CONDUCT A ROUTINE U-2 RECON TRAIN-
ING FLIGHT IN THE VICINITY OF THE GUAJIRA PENINSULA.
FOLLOWING INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTANT PHOTOGRAPHS, A
C-130 RECON TRAINING MISSION COULD BE FLOWN IN THE SAME

GENERAL AREA USING A FORWARD LOOKING INFRARED (FLIR) SENSOR.
BOTH THE U-2 PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE SENSOR VIDEOTAPE WOULD

WOULD THEN BE DELIVERED TO AMBASSADOR ASECIO FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE GOC, AS APPROPRIATE.

3. THE TRAINING FLIGHTS WOULD BE BENEFICIAL NOT ONLY TO THE USAF, BUT ALSO TO THE NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAMS OF THE USG AND GOC BECAUSE OF THE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE PHOTOS AND VIDEOTAPE TO EFFORTS AGAINST ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC TO THE U.S. EMANATING FROM THE GUAJIRA PENINSULA. IF EMBASSY CONCURS, THE FLIGHTS WILL BE SCHEDULED IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. REQUESTS FOR DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE WILL BE SUBMITTED SEPARATELY.

4. AS AN UPDATE ON RELATED MATTERS, THE LOA FOR THE A/T-37B AIRCRAFT AND IP TRAINING HAVE BEEN SIGNED BY THE COLOMBIAN AIR ATTACHE. ADDITIONALLY, THERE HAVE BEEN INFORMAL QUERIES BY GOC REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON CONCERNING THE SALE OR LEASE OF A FLIR TO THE GOC. SINCE THIS EQUIPMENT IS NOT NORMALLY RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO THE GOC. NONETHELESS, WE ARE PREPARED TO GIVE EVERY CONSIDERATION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A TRANSFER SHOULD A FORMAL REQUEST BE SUBMITTED.

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5. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY VIEWS ON PROPOSED USAF OPERATION DESCRIBED IN PARAS 2 AND 3 ABOVE.
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